

THE
PROOF.
OF A
Good Preacher.

The Right Art of Hearing.

That Good Counsel, is seldome
well taken.

That Wilful Offenders, are as Wit-
less as Wicked.

With
An Apologie for wholesome Truth,
how distastful soever.

By *R. Tounge of Roxwel in Essex.*

Licensed and Entred according to Order.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *Tho: Milbourn*, and are to be sold by *Peter Parker*
in Popes-head-Alley. With many other Pieces
composed by the same Author. 1666.

THE
PROOF

Good

Printed to order of the

Parliament of Great Britain



Printed by

at the

of

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year



Good Counsel,

Seldom well taken :

W I T H

*An Apologie for wholesome Truth, be
it never so untoothsome, &c.*

Señ. 1.



Hilosophy teaches, that admonitions and corrections are the chiefest offices of love : That it is the onely true love, which to profit and do good, seareth not to hurt and offend : That to connive at our friends faults, is to make them our own. That sharp reprehension is the healing of the soul ; and that love to the soul, is the very soul of

love. Whence *Euripides* exhorts men to get such friends, as would not spare to displease them. Whence *Scipio* the

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Elder,

Elder, when his friends for so doing turned his enemies, was able to say, *I have given mine enemies as great cause to love me as my friends.* And indeed he that loves not such a friend, hates himself. And commonly, he that will not tell us of our faults, will be very ready to tell others of them; whereas one that is faithful, will speak of our faults to our face, of our virtues behind our backs. But see farther the sweet fruit of sharp reprehension: Suppose one should be stung by a Bee, (when asleep) whereby he is delivered from a Serpent, which otherwise had stung him to death; Hath he cause to complain? And not to chide a friend, lest we offend him, is to let him drown, rather then catch him by the hair. Wherefore give me such a friend as *Photion*, who when a friend of his would have cast himself away, suffered him not, saying, *I was made thy friend to this purpose.* All which is sound Divinity, neither wants it Scripture-seal to confirm it. Not to admonish our brother, is to hate him, as the Holy Ghost witnesseth, *Lev. 19. 17.* But to scorn our brother should admonish us, is more to hate our selves; in that *open rebuke is better then secret love.* And for that *the very wounds of a lover are faithful, and better then the kisses of an enemy,* *Prov. 27. 5, 6.* Yea, experience teaches, that no friend is so commodious in this case as an enemy; because he tells us of that, which otherwise we should never be so happy as to hear of.

Nevertheless, resolved sinners scorn reproof: Admonition to them, is like goads to such as are mad already; or like pouring oyl down the chimney, which may set the house on fire, but never abate the heat; which is not for want of ignorance: for by refusing to hear in this case, they become (like *Amaziah*) wilful murderers of their own souls, as wise *Solomon* affirms, his words are, *He that refuseth admonition is brutish, and destroyeth his own soul,* *Prov. 12. 1. & 15. 32.* yea, he goes further, and says, *A man that hardeneth his neck when he is reprov'd, shall suddenly be destroyed, and cannot be cured,* *Prov. 29. 1. & 1. 24, 25, 26.* of which

which you have most remarkable and dreadful examples, 1 Sam. 2. 25. 2 Chron. 25. 16, 20.

Señ. 2.

Señ. 2. Nevertheless, how few are there so wise, as to take admonition well? For *Reprove a scorner, (that is, a fool) and he will hate thee; reprove a wise man, and he will love thee*, Prov. 9. 8. To which we may add *Prov 22. 3. A wise man foreseeth the evil, (that is the evil of Hell, says Bernard) and preventeth it; but fools go on and are punished.*

Now that these Bruits and Soul-destroyers, may the better be known to themselves and others, and the greatness of their folly and madness, together with what a world of them there are amongst us, (for to be wise, according to wise *Solomons* description, is the portion but of a few, as daily experience witnesseth.) I will paint them out in a small Table, or Map; and so expose them to view.

In the first place you shall know them by this mark: A man no sooner tells them of a fault, but it works in their brains as yeast in a barrel, until they have requited their Admonisher with a mischief; being like Gunpowder, to which you no sooner give fire, but they fly in your face. Admonition may move them to choller, never to amendment. Who when they have heard an untoothsome truth, like waters after a tempest, are full of working and swelling against their Admonisher. We read that in the law of Jealousies, if the suspected Wife were guilty that drank of the bitter waters of tryal, she would presently swell; if otherwise, she was well enough. And it is a sure signe the Horse is gauled, that stirs too much when he is touched; so when they swell against their Reprehender, and hiss like Serpents, if we trouble their nests never so little, you may justly conclude them guilty persons. For no greater signe of innocency, when we are accused, than mildness, as we see in *Joseph*, Gen. 39. 17, 18. And *Susanna*, *Susanna*. ver. 42, 43. And *Hannah*, 1 Sam. 1. 15, 16. Neither is there a greater symptom of guiltiness, than our breaking into choller,

choller, when we have any thing laid to our charge : witness *Cain*, *Gen.* 4. 9. that Hebrew which strook his fellow, *Exod.* 2. 13, 14. *Saul*, *1 Sam.* 20. 32, 33. *Abner*, *2 Sam.* 3. 8. *Jeroboam*, *1 King.* 13. 4. *Ahab*, *1 King.* 22. 27. *Amaziah*, *2 Chron.* 25. 16. *Uzziah*, *2 Chron.* 26. 19. *Herod the Tetrach*, *Luke* 3. 19, 20. The men of Nazareth, *Luke* 4. 28, 29. The Pharisees, *John* 8. 47, 48. The High Priest and Scribes, *Luke* 20. 19, 20. And the like touching a mans wisdom and humility. *Plato* being demanded how he knew a wise man, answered, *When being rebuked he would not be angry, and being praised he would not be proud.* And to this accords that of the wise man, *Prov.* 11. 2. and 19. 11. But for one that is so wise, there is a thousand of those fools I am to decipher, who with *Balaam* will grutch to be hindered in their way to Hell, and fly upon those that oppose their perdition : even such as think it better to fry everlastingly in a furnace of fire and brimstone in Hell-flames, then to inherit a celestial and eternal Kingdome, and weight of superabundant Glory in Heaven, to enjoy a Paradise of pleasure, where are such joys, *as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can ever enter into the heart of man to conceive*, *1 Cor.* 2. 9. This is most mens depth of brain, and thus it fares with all wilful and impenitent sinners. But how hath the Devil bewitched them ? Is it possible that the reasonable soul of man (not professedly barbarous) should be capable of such a monster ? Certainly if I did not know the truth and probate of it, by ocular and experimental demonstration from day to day, I could hardly bring my understanding to believe it.

But to make this further appear, though I have small hope to prevail with the parties themselves, (for they that have no reason, will hear none ; and he that learns of none but himself, hath a fool for his Teacher.) Guilty sinners will swell against their reprehender, innocent souls will be cheered & cleared by it, *Num.* 5. 21, 22. Resolved offenders being reproved, in stead of penitence break into choller ;

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fury sparkles in those eyes which should gush out with water; and in stead of embracing the counsel, will rage at the Counsellour. Crossed wickedness proves desperate, and in stead of yeilding, seeks for revenge of its own sins upon others uprightness; whereas if anothers simple fidelity shews it self in reproving the honest hearted, he loves his Monitor so much the more, by how much the more he smarteth, allowing of truth as well when it hurts him, as when it helps him.

But unsound flesh loves to be stroaked, the least roughness puts it into a rage; a festered conscience will not endure a drawing plaister; a putrid & scabbed limb delights to be scratcht and rubbed; foul faces would have false glasses: *Diomedes* must have a crooked shooe for his wry foot; *Caligula* must be adored as a god forsooth, though he live like a Devil, poysoning his Uncle, and deflowring all his sisters. Thorns must be touched with a gentle hand, not grasped: these Ulcers must be no further searched into, then the dead flesh reaches; for if you but touch them to the quick, you shall quickly hear of it, and be sure to smart for it.

Señ. 3.

But to bring this home to you of this place, with whom my business lies; for hitherto I have but spoken in the air, as the Apostle speaks, or onely paved a way to my intended matter, or at uttermost but given you a Preparative before hand, as Physitians do to their Patients, that their Physick may work the more kindly. Your Pastour hath for many years preached in the Metropolitan City, where they are more civilized and better bred, without any clamour; yea, with much approbation, for they entertained him as *Lot* did those Angels, that came to fetch him out of *Sodom*; but you entertain him as courselly, as the *Ammonites* did *Dauids* messengers. Nor did the Devil ever so rage in this rude place, as he hath done since his preaching hath awakened your Consciences, and by the Look-

ing-Glass of the Law, and light of the Gospel, shew you the deformity and filthiness of your souls. A notable Argument that Satan fears he shall be routed, and his Kingdom more shaken in your quarters, then hath fallen out in former times, or by the preaching of any that have gone before him, for he dayly rages more and more amongst you. As for instance, at first he was opposed by a few simple Sectaries, and that was no small honour to him, as *Hieram* told *Austin* in the like case. But now his preaching against Drunkenness, Deceitfulness, Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, Ignorance, Formality, and such other common sins, hath brought all the Parish about his ears; for not alone the Wit-foundered Drunkard, but the Civil Justiciary, the Formal Hypocrite, the Ignorant Animal, and all sorts of impenitent sinners. And why? But because the vertue and efficacy of Gods Word, which is quick and powerful, and sharper then any two-edged Sword, to divide between the soul and spirit, joynts and marrow, as it is *Heb. 4. 12.* hath discovered and made manifest to your selves and others, the very secrets and most inward intents of your hearts. Insomuch that your Consciences are forced to bear witness against your selves, that you are the parties to whom he speaks, as if he named you, or each of you in particular, as you have an instance, *1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. Heb. 4. 12.* whence your guilty Consciences suggest, that he aims at you in particular, though he names none, when indeed it is onely the prerogative and spirituality of the Word, above all other Writings, to discover the hearts, and speak home to the Consciences of all that hear it delivered with power and authority. As for the Messenger, the truth of his heart gives him boldness to profess before him who onely knows it, that he strives against no man but his strife, maligns no man but his malice, envies no man but his envy, as *Hierome* speaks. Yea, he could be more glad to see any mans (even his greatest enemies) amendment, than his punish-

punishment. This (I say) is the genuine reason, why hundreds of you fret, and chafe, and fume, and swell, and storm, and rage, and are ready to burst again when you hear him. Your sins and deformities are so discovered and detected, your presumptuous confidence of being Christians good enough, and of your going to Heaven so questioned, that your peace is disturbed, and you will be revenged of some body.

It is observable, that when our Saviour sent forth his Apostles to preach abroad in the world, having first taught them the way, his words to them were, *Behold, I send you forth as sheep amongst wolves*, Matth. 10. 16. Are not you these Wolves? not onely Wolvish, but meer Wolves? Yes, you are, and will be, until the Gospel shall have wrought a change in your hearts and natures, *Hebrews* 10. 16. *Acts* 15. 9. and 20. 29. Again, Matth. 7. 6. he says, *Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they tread them under their feet, and turning again all to rent you.* Are not you those unreasonable Beasts and Swine? If not, who are? Yea, you are more brutish then a Swine, or any other unreasonable creature. For whereas Christ by his Ministers, would reconcile you to God, as *Joab* did *Absalom* to *David*, by the Woman of *Tekoa*; you cry they come to torment you before the time, Matth. 8. 29. Your case is just like his in the Gospel, that called himself *Legion*, who having been possessed with Devils along time, was at length very loath to part with his Guests: yea, he thought himself tormented, when Christ came to cast out them, and save him, *Mark* 1. 24. *Luke* 8. 28.

Sect. 4.

Now what course do you take to be revenged of him ? For this makes you hate him above measure, mis-construe his actions and intentions, rail on him, slander him, curse him, withstand and contrary his doctrine, watch for his halting, combine together and lay plots how you may do him the most mischief, which is all you are able to do : for else you would bring him before the Magistrate, imprison, smite, wound, and put him to death, as the Jews served Christ, as I could shew you from a world of testimonies and examples out of the Word. See onely *John* 16.2,3,3. *Matth.* 24.9. *Matth.* 10.34,35,36. *Luke* 12.51, 52,53. and 21.16,17. But our comfort is, you have not so much authority as malice ; resembling the Serpent *Porphyrus*, which abounds with poyson, but can hurt none, for want of teeth. Though your punishment shall be never the less ; for good and evil thoughts, and desires in Gods account, are good and evil works, and shall so be judged in that Court of justice where is no partiality.

But since you cannot do as you would, you will do what you can ; as it fared with *Zoilus*, that common slanderer, or as it does with the Devil, *Revel.* 12.15. For if the Law binds your hands, yet you will be smiting with your tongues ; and if the Law so keeps you in awe, that you dare not smite him on the mouth, as the High Priest did *Paul*, *Acts* 23.2. yet you will do what you dare, you will smite him with the mouth, as *Ziba* did honest *Mephibosheth*, 2 *Sam.* 16.3. And the like touching his maintenance, because you cannot out him of his living, you will defraud and rob him of his means and livelihood, and neither pay him a penny your selves, nor suffer others, so far as you can help it, which is a plot to pluck up all religion by the roots : For how should our Pastores feed our souls, if we feed not their bodies ? How should the lamp burn, if we take away the holy oyl that should maintain it ? and in case it burn not, there will be but a dark house. So, that
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to expect that Minilters should preach without maintenance, is as if you should shut a bird into a cage, give her no meat, and yet bid her sing.

Nevertheless it pleases you, that you can (as you think) displease him, and withal pleasure your selves in saving your silver, little dreaming what you do; for look but narrowly into it, and you shall see that this is not onely persecution, theft, sacriledge, murder of bodies and souls, of provoking God to send a famine of his Word, and the like: but you become by it guilty of high treason against God, in thus using his Ambassadour, and against Christ and all his members, as I have elsewhere made manifest. Though it is wicked enough for you to impeach his credit, asperse his spotless name, and take away his reputation, that so none else may hear him, or regard what he delivers, which is a wickeder plot than your blind souls are able to discern. Besides, *A good name (says Solomon) is better than a good oyntment: and to be chosen above great riches, Prov. 22 1.*

Indeed his life is so well known, that all the harm you do him is, but as a candle to a white wall: that may much black it (among such Sensualists as your selves) but cannot burn it, though that be too much, for a mans good name is like a milk white ball, that exceedingly gathers soil even with tossing.

Nor can he expect to fare better, so long as he carries with you, where Satan hath his throne, in a place that mostly consists of Swearers, Drunkards and Drink-sellers. He hath by his powerful preaching raised the Devil: in many of you, but it will be hard laying him again: yea, once to expect it (when God hath given men over to their own lusts) were an effect of frenzie, not of hope. For can he with *Crabronius*, be ever pudling in a wasps nest, and think to escape their stings? Or be still blowing in the dust, and not endanger his eyes? It is no way possible. For, he that toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith. - *He that*

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reproveth a scorner, purchaseth to himself shame : and he that rebuketh the wicked, getteth himself a blot, Prov.9. 7,8. See Jer. 18.

Though I speak not this to dis-hearten him whom God hath placed over you : for Gods Glory we are bound to redeem with our own lives. And a conscionable Minister is like *David*, who would venture upon a Bear, rather than lose a Lamb. Or *Jacob*, who would endure heat by day, and frost by night, rather then neglect his flocks. Or *Moses*, who would fight with odds, rather than the Cattle should perish with thirst. Onely a *Balaam* wants this mercy.

Nor can I wish him to spare you ever the more, by delivering himself in a gentler tone ; as you, like the men of *Bengala*, would have onely words of down and honey, have him speak nothing but pure roses, preach unto you *Peace, peace*, and prophesie of wine and strong drink, then should he be a welcome Prophet to you : But this were to fulfill the Proverb, *Like Pastores, like people Hos.4.9.* Yea, this were, for *the blind to lead the blind, that both might fall into the ditch together, Luke 6. 39.* Alas, the fault lies not in the Word, nor in his delivering it, but in the wickedness of your hearts that are the hearers : Who like the Spider, will suck poyson from the self same flower that the Bee does honey. Nor will any truth (be it never so un-toothsome) offend any, but ill minds, *Michah 2.7.* Yea, even the same words that are lansets to a bad mans conscience, will be as balm to penitent sinners. The Word being like some mighty wind, that bears over tall Elms or Cedars, with the same blast that it raiseth a stooping Reed, *Exod.20.21.*

Señ. 5.

Every line of Gods VVord, adds sinew to the vertuous minde, and withal heals that vice which would be springing in it : The very judgements of God to a good man, are *sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb, Psal.19.10.*

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But alas, the same report, wherewith the spirit of *Rahab* melts, hardens the King of *Jericho*, *Josh. 2.* *Sergius Paulus* was converted, *Elymas* obdurate at the same Sermon, *Acts 13.* Yea, even the same face of the Judge; without any inward alteration, is seen with terror to the guilty, with joy and confidence by the oppressed innocent. The same rod that brought plagues to the Egyptians, brings deliverance to Israel.

But I dare refer the case to thine own conscience to determine, (if the custom of sin, and the god of this world hath not totally blinded thee) where the fault lies, and who is to be blamed in this particular? Is the Physician to be blamed for the pain of his Patient, or the disease? The Chirurgeon or the Wound, which he endeavours by all means to cure? Yea, what is the genuine reason, why the worst men and members of a Parish evermore regard a good Minister least? complain of his bitterness, and seek by all means to remove him? Is it not because they are feet, and legs, and thighs, and arms out of joynt, and so cannot endure the touch of the Chirurgeons hand, and the acrimony of his Medicines? Alas, every good Physician had rather cure a disease by sleep and diet, then by *Scammony* and *Castorium*: but an intemperate sick man maketh a cruel Physician. And in case the disease be desperate, he must use the extremity of Physick. Nothing will ease the Pluresie but letting of blood: and to such as are sick of a dead Apoplexie, they are forced to give a double quantity of physick, or their faculties will not be awakened. Which is the very case of these desperate sinners, who if they wanted not brains, would in stead of complaining be thankful. The Physician and Chirurgeon heals us not without pain, and yet we reward them. Yea, had any of you but a leg, or an arm putrified and corrupt, you would even give money, and think your selves beholding too, to have them cut off, because it is the onely way and means to preserve the whole body. And if so, what love
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and thanks can be too much, that is exprest to them, who would (would you give them leave) pluck you out of Satans clutches, and bring you to life eternal? Nor can he ever be thankful to God, who is not thankful to the instrument, or means, by whom God does, or would do him good.

Besides, it were a breach of justice, not to proportion the rebuke to the crime: For, for a Minister to use gentle reprehension, in case of capital offences, that is, in case of thefts, rapines, sacriledges, adulteries and incests, to say to his people, as *Eli* to his sons, *Why did you so?* is no other then to shave that head which deserves cutting off. For as it is with ill humors in the body, that a weak dose doth but stir and anger them, not purge them out; yea, if Physick be not strong enough to purge out choller, it encreaseth choller; the humours it would have purged and expelled, (if it had been strong enough) it inflameth, exasperateth and sharpeneth. And as the Sun in the Spring-time breedeth agues, and other distempers, because it stirreth humours, and doth not waste them; so it fareth with sins in the soul. An easie and gentle reproof doth but encourage wickedness, and make it think it self so slight, as that rebuke importeth, which is to patronize evil in stead of reproofing it. And experience shews, that cold Preachers make bold sinners. However, such being like ill Archers, that draw not their arrows up to the head, seldom convert these sinners.

Nevertheless, resolute sinners would have dissolute Teachers; would have the Law according to their lives, not their lives according to the Law. That pleaseth them which is sweet to the sense, not that which is wholsome to the conscience, as the holy Ghost informs us, *Isai. 30. 10.* *1 King. 12. 8.* *Mich. 2. 11.* Like wanton children, they care not to be mended, but to be commended: He that praiseth them, pleaseth them.

But wo to such Preachers, as shall heal the hurt of these people with sweet words, saying, *Peace, peace,* and give them

them comfort. (as *Jezebel* did *Ahab*, 1 *King*. 21. 5, 6, 7.) when they rather deſerve a curſe, *Jer*. 8. 11. For this is no other then guilded treaſon, like that of *Hazael* to his Maſter, who told him with his mouth, that he ſhould recover, when on the morrow he ſtifled him with his hand, and a wet cloth, 2 *King*. 8. 14, 15. Whence the Holy Ghoſt brands all flattering Preachers, that ſow pillows, for *faſſe prophets*, *Jer*. 8. 11. And indeed it is but a Mountebank trick, [to heal an Ulcer, and leave in the core. A good Phyſician, either for ſoul or body, firſt tells the ſtate of the diſeaſe with its ſymptoms, and then preſcribes; and in preſcribing, firſt pulls down the body with purgatives, and then raiſeth it with Cordials. And take this for a rule, ſuch as fear God, and are Miniſters of his ſending, will think it better to looſe mens favours than their ſouls, and be ſure to diſcharge his conſcience from the burthen of any ones blood, *Ezek*. 3. 18. & 33. 8. Yea, an ingenious Patient ſhould be ſo wiſe as to know, that the ſtomack ſhould rather be pleaſed than the pallete; and experience tells us, that thoſe things (for the moſt part) that are leaſt pleaſing, are moſt whoſome. Rue is an Hearb moſt bitter to the taſte, yet in regard of the vertue which is in it, we uſually call it *Herb of Grace*. And Phyſicians find, that though *Mithridate*, of all other Electuaries, it be the moſt diſtaſteful, yet of all others it is the moſt whoſome. And ſo it fares touching ſpiritual Truths. Whence a good Preacher cares not ſo much to ſtroke the ear, as to ſtrike the Conſcience: being like a good Phyſician, who gives ſharp Medicines, and bitter Potions, that he may make ſhort Diſeaſes, and procure ſound health. The true method of Preaching, and the likeliſt way to undeceive the deceived, and (with bleſſing from above) to pluck ſinners out of Satans ſnares is, for a Miniſter to deal with his Hearers, as the Prophet did by *Hazael*, when he plainly told him the abominable wickedneſſe of his heart, and what evil (even beyond belief) he ſhould ſhortly do or execute

execute, had he been wise enough to have been warned thereby. Or as *Nathan* did by *David*, when he so cunningly made him pronounce sentence of death against himself. Or as *Jonah* did by the *Ninevites*, when with that short-thundering Sermon of eight words, he converted that great City. Or as *Peter* by his Converts, when he told them they were the men that had crucified the Lord of life. Or *John Baptist* by *Herod*, and all that came unto him. Or as *Christ* by the woman of *Samaria*, when he so represented the very thoughts of her heart unto her conscience, that she was forced to confess, *He hath told me all things that ever I did.* Or as he did with *Saul*, when he spake to him from Heaven, which words made him tremble, and fall to the earth with astonishment. Which makes one of the Fathers say, that *the crown of Preachers is the tears of their hearers.* And *St. Basil*, that *Sharp reprehension is the healing of the soul.* And *Chrysostom* say to his hearers, *If I make you smart, give me the more thanks for it.* Nay says *Basil*, *It may well be feared that Ministers open not the Word aright, when wicked men kick not against it.* And *Luther* was of that judgement, that he thought if Ministers should preach the Word as they ought, they should stir up all the Furies of Hell against themselves.

Señ. 6.

Now what's the reason, why down-right truth is so unpleasing to carnal minds? when none can deny, but it is by far the more wholsom. It is this, All men love the light as it shines, but as it discovers and directs, the most of men hate it. None so bad, but they can away with pleasing truths, and promises of mercy. Or let the Minister walk in generals, and labour more to fill the head with knowledge, than the heart with grace; to please the sense, than speak to the conscience (by driving an application close home to them in particular, touching some one sin of theirs, which is the soul of preaching) so long they will
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like him; yea, he is a fair and good Church-man, a great Scholar. But let him act the part of *Boanerges*, thunder out the judgements of God againſt ſinners, let him do as God commands *Ezekiel* to do, *Ezek. 4. 4.* Answer them according to their Idols, preach to their neceſſities, preſſe them to holy duties, reprove them for their unholy practices, make known to them what evil conſciences they have, then they turn their backs upon him, and hate him to the death, as *Ahab* did *Elijah* and *Micaiah*, *Herod* and *Herodias*, *John Baptist*; the Jews, our Saviour; and the Galatians, *Paul*. See *Amos 5. 10.* yea, they will ſay, *Away with ſuch a fellow from the earth, for it is not meet that he ſhould live.* The caſe of all incorrigible, and cauterized ſinners, as well the covetous as the riotous; the civil, ſuch as ſeek to fill their cheſts, as thoſe that are all for ſatisfying of their luſts. For let a Miniſter but rowze and raiſe them out of their ſecurity, ſaying, *Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand up from the dead,* all are inſtantly about his ears. Then the wit-foundered Drunkard cries out, ſaying, *He ſubverts the ſtate of the world, and troubles our City:* then the covetous Oppreſſor is ready to tell the Prophet, (as the Sodomites *Lot*) *Away hence, he is come alone as a ſtranger, and ſhall he judge and rule?* then the whole Rabble (*furiously raging together againſt the Lord, and againſt his Anointed*) conclude peremptorily, that a piece of a Pulpit and half a Benefice, is too much for ſuch an unquiet ſpirit, ſuch a fire-flinger. As let *Paul* but touch *Demetrius* his Copy-hold, preach down his profit, he and all of like occupation will roar out of meaſure, *Act. 19. 28.* Wherein they ſhew as great policy, as did the Sodomites, who made haſte to turn out *Lot* and his family, that fire and brimſtone might make haſte to deſtroy them.

A guilty conſcience loves application as dearly as a dog loves a cudgel. Sore eyes cannot endure the light of the Sun, nor Bankrupts the ſight of their Counting-books, nor deformed faces of the true glaſs. A man were

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as good take an Elephant by the tooth, or seek to rob a Bear of her whelps, as go about to make them better. For let a Minister charge them from God, like rusty or ill-wrought pieces, they will recoyl in his face; and like Serpents, not onely be deaf to his charming, but turn their tails to sting him. Wherein they resemble the mad man, that wounded his Physician, while he was administering Physick to him for his recovery. They more seek for a rag to cover their sins, then for a plaister to heal them; as it fared with *David*, while he slept in that foul sin of adultery, 2 *Sam.* 11. 5, 6. &c.

Now if they are so startled and terrified at the Ministers telling them of one or a few sins, what will they do when Satan, and the Searcher of hearts, shall lay open all the sins that ever they have committed, and spread them before them? If it be so dreadful to hear of what they shall suffer, if they repent not, how terrible will it be to feel it? The Law Wasp-like stings shrewdly, but Satan that Hornet will sting worse a great deal. But if men will be warned by the former, they may prevent the latter: onely these want that we commonly call *reason*; therefore like children and cowards, they rather shut their eyes, and chuse to feel the blow, then to see and endeavour to avoid it. O woful wretches! that had rather be everlastingly damned for their sins hereafter, then endure to hear of them now, to their eternal comfort. But I hope better things of some amongst so great a number.

Gods truth if you mark it, would cry down mens sins, as preaching would have done *Demetrius* his trade; and therefore no marvel if the Tradetmen of iniquity are up in arms against the Gospel, as *Demetrius* was against *Paul*. And did not the Gospel cross their sins, they would not cross the Gospel: but the waves do not beat or roar any where so much, as at the bank that restrains them.

The Pharisees could not endure *Jesus*, because he came to break their customs, *Luk.* 6. 2. The Masters of the *Pythones*,

ness, Act 16.21. objected this against *Paul* and *Silas*, that they did teach contrary to their customs. For this cause was that uproar at *Ephesus*, Acts 19 26, to 31. *Paul* had never become their enemy, but for telling them the truth, and dealing so plainly and roundly with them. And why did more then forty of the Jews bind themselves with a curse, neither to eat nor drink till they had killed him? Acts 23. not for the evils they found in him, but for the vices he reprov'd in them. By all which it appears, that obstinate sinners are as witless as wicked; and that they would, if they durst, deal with their faithful Pastors, as the Jews did by *Stephen*, who in their blind zeal were so furious & merciless, that they put him to death, for shewing them the way to eternal life; and stoned him for a blasphemer against God and his Law, who was a man full of faith, and power, and of the holy Ghost, Act. 7.55, &c. It hath ever been the manner of wickedness, to be head-strong in the pursuit of its own courses, impatient of opposition, cruel in revenge of the opposers. The great spight and spleen therefore, that men bear to the Word, must be wreaked upon the Minister, he must be hated, outed, and persecuted: yea, if they durst, they would stone him to death, as the Jews did *Stephen*: for as their hearts brast for anger, as they gnashed at him with their teeth when they heard him, Act. 7.54. so fares it with these touching their Minister. But in the mean time, what horrible, what hellish ingratitude is this, if it be looked upon with an impartial eye? Are not these the very worst of monsters? O you sottish Sensualists, what can you alledge for your selves, or against your Minister? is he any other to you, then those three Messengers were to *Lot*, that came to fetch him out of *Sodom*, that he might not feel the fire and brimstone which followed? Gen. 19. Or then the Angel was to *Peter*, that opened the iron-gates, loosed his bands, brought him out of prison, and delivered him from the thraldome of his enemies? You shew just as much reason in it, as if those blind, deaf, diseased, di-

ſtracted, poſſeſſed, or dead perſons ſpoken of in the *Gospel*, ſhould have railed upon our Saviour for offering to cure, reſtore, diſpoſſeſs, recover and raiſe them again. And are like thoſe wicked, witleſs, and ungrateful Jews, *Judg. 15.* who when God, in great love, ſent *Sampſon* to deliver them from the ſlaviſh thraldome of their enemies; they in requital bind him, (in whom all their hope of deliverance lay) and deliver him up to thoſe enemies that kept them under, to the end they might ſlay him, and ſtill make ſlaves of them. Here is your caſe right. Are you not aſhamed to be ſuch Sots? Were there ever any fools, or frenzy men committed a greater folly? For ſhame think of it before it prove too late, before you have ſinned away all hope of mercy: In the mean time, as our Saviour ſaid of his murderers, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do:* ſo may your Miniſter ſay, adding thereto that prayer of *Stephen* when they ſtoned him, *Lord, lay not this ſin to their charge,* *Act. 7. 60.*

Señ. 7.

But that I may, if it be poſſible, fetch tears from your eyes, and blood from your *adamantine hearts*, I will yet acquaint you with that which is worſe, and more conſiderable then all, I pray mind it: All the indignities & wrongs that are done to Chriſts Miniſters and Ambaſſadors, redound to him; and he that traduceth, or any way wrongs a Miniſter, for the diſcharge of his place, his envy ſtrikes at the image of God in him, and he ſo takes it, as a world of places ſhew. *He that deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me,* *1 Sam. 17. 45.* *Iſai. 37. 23.* *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* *Act. 9. 4.* *Rev. 16. 9, 11.* *Pſal. 89. 23.* To ſpurn at the Meſſenger, is to ſtrike at the image of God, whoſe meſſage it is. What ſaith *Paul*? *1 Cor. 7. 10.* *I have not ſpoken, but the Lord:* and therefore as the Lord ſaid unto *Saul*, *Acts 9. 4.* *that he perſecuted Him,* (though in Heaven) ſo they who reſiſt any truth delivered out of the Word, do reſiſt God himſelf, and not his Meſſenger. But ſee further what you do,
by

by what your fellow-persecutors have done before you. With such impatience does a gauled heart receive admonition, that when God himself came to reprove *Cain* for killing his brother *Abel*, he had no sooner spake these words, *Where is Abel thy brother?* but he returns to God himself this churlish answer, *Am I my brothers keeper?* Gen. 4. 9. Again, the Scribes, Pharisees and Elders, were filled full of madness against our Saviour, and communed one with another, what they might do to Jesus, and how they might destroy him, (the which you would also do, if he were your Minister, and now upon earth) for being so bitter, Luk. 6. 11. (For if you cannot away with the light of a candle, you would much less endure to look upon the glorious Sun.) Now if God himself was so served, if Christ's own doctrine could not escape persecution, no marvel if his Messengers cannot. Here then is some comfort for your Minister, *Honey out of a Lyon*. Nor is it his shame to suffer what Christ suffered, nor your honour to do as *Cain*, *Judas*, and the rest did, as *Cyprian* speaks.

But secondly, Take notice what our Saviours counsel is to his Ministers, when his holy precepts and prohibitions, do either harden men as the Sun hardens clay, and cold water hot iron; or else irrage them, as a furious Mastiff-dog is the madder for his Chain. What his counsel and method is, may be seen both by testimonies and examples not a few. As, *Cast not your pearls before swine*, Mat. 7. 6. *Into whatsoever city you shall enter, if they will not receive you, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust which cleaveth on us of your city, we wipe off against you, for a witness unto you. notwithstanding know this, that it shall be easier for Sodom and Gomorrah at the day of judgment then for you*, Luk. 10. 10, 11, 12. *Those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me*, Luk. 19. 27.

And that this is an evident signe of one that shall eternally perish, is plain, *Prov.* 29. 1. read the words and trem-

ble, *A man that hardeneth his neck being often reprov'd, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.* See more Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26. to 33. VVhence it is the Prophet tells *Amaziah, I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this, and hast not obeyed my counsel,* 2 Chron. 25. 16, 20. And that the holy Ghost, speaking of *Eli's sons, saith, that They would not hearken unto, nor obey the voice of their father, because the Lord was determined to destroy them,* 1 Sam. 2. 25. Yea, it is an obervation of *Livie*, That when the destruction of a person or Nation is destined, then the wholsome warnings both of God and man are set at nought. And in reason, that sin is past cure, that strives against the cure. Herbs that are worse for watering, Trees that are less fruitful for dunging and pruning, are to be rooted out, or hewen down. Even salvation it self will not save those that spill the potion, and sling away the plaister. VVhen men are the worse for Gods endeavour to better them, the best and onely way is, to leave them to their Judge. Those Beasts we cannot master, we must give up. If *Babylon* will not be cured, she must be left to her self, given up to destruction without further warning. *My people would not hear my voice, (saith God) and Israel would none of me,* Psal. 81. and what follows? *So I gave them up to the hardness of their hearts, and they walkt in their own counsels,* vers. 11, 12. All further patience would prove fruitless: so he layeth by his rod, to take up his sword; as God hath Messengers of wrath for them that despise the Messengers of his love.

Sett 8.

Now to end with a word of exhortation, to as many of you as have heard what hath hitherto been delivered, from one that is no party, and so less subject to be partial) and that are not yet given over.

In the first place, be not any longer offended with your Pastor, for he is appointed a watch-man over your souls, and doth but discharge his office that God hath placed him

him in, *Ezek. 3. 17.* and he should be guilty of high treason against Christ, and the souls committed to his care, if he should do less. As the Centinel or Captain, that doth not what he can to maintain the walls, doth what he can to betray the City. The Word is no other then Christ, though delivered by a weak Instrument. VVhoever be the Crier, the Proclamation is the King of Heavens. (While it goes for mans, it is no marvel if it lie open to despight.) So that in hating your Minister, and complaining of his bitterness, you do as wisely and justly, as if the people should impute the cause of the War to the Herald, or accuse the trumpet for all that their rebellion hath brought upon them. Yea, consider who is the Author of the *Word*, what the cause and ends of the Ministers delivering it; and that there is nothing can cure your grief, but the same Word that caused it: and then thou wilt receive him as an Angel of God, yea, even as Christ Jesus; as the primitive Christians did the Apostles, *Gal. 4. 14.* who acknowledged to owe, even themselves, to their spiritual Pastors, *Phil. 1. 19.* And would, if it had been possible, have pluckt out their own eyes, and have given the same unto them, *Gal. 4. 14. 15.* and *6. 6.*

You have heard sufficiently, that this is the true method of preaching, though it be little used, because discretion (with many) eats up well nigh all true devotion. Their discretion and moderate stayedness, much abates of their zeal, honesty and goodness.

Nor can there be a better argument to prove, that a Minister studies more to profit then to please men with his wholsome counsel, then when he will not let them sleep and snort in their sins, but cry aloud against their abominations.

I grant Corrasives are not to be used in all cases, Lenitives and Cordials are of no less use to weak constitutions. VVhence the care of every wise and able Minister, that hath skill to divide the VVord of God aright, must be

and is, to give to each man his due portion; comfort to whom comfort belongs, terrour to whom terrour is due; observing the same rule that St. Paul did, who meeting with an *Elymas*, one that resisted the truth, and laboured to keep others from it, *entreats* him not with fair and sweet words, as he did *Agrippa*, who was hopefully coming on to embrace the truth. Wherefore the same Apostle says to the one, *O full of all subtlety & all mischief, thou child of the devil, and enemy of all righteousness*, Acts 13. 10. But when he speaks to the other, it is in a more mild, gentle, and winning tone. Or as our Saviour himself used, (that Lamb of God, who would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax) As how doth he multiply wo upon wo, and threaten double damnation, when he was to deal with hard-hearted Hypocrites, Opposers of the Gospel, those Scribes and Pharisees? Mat. 23. And indeed the best musick is made by a judicial correspondence of sharp and flat. Let all merciful and meal-mouthed Preachers, such as flatter sin and flout holiness, such whose scope of their preaching is but to feed the people with hopes, though they give them no grounds for it, *That heaven shall meet them at their last hour, be their condition never so wretched*; which is the reason that most men walk in the broad way, and yet every man *thinks to enter in at the strait gate*. Let these, I say, take notice of this. As also scorers of their Teachers and Instructors, and more of their godly instruction: then will they love whom and what they now hate, and hate whom and what they now love. But you have no cause to complain of either extream: for in the Sermons, against which you except, there is matter of instruction, of reprehension, of consolation, of exhortation; for the ignorant, for the sinful, for the faithful, for the despairing soul, and drooping spirit; not Gospel without Law, nor Law without Gospel, but a sweet composition of severity and mercy wherein Law and Gospel meet, as *Moses* and *Christ* met upon the Mount: the one to direct your obedience,

dience, the other to answer for your disobedience, if you will but repent and turn unto God, with such Christian moderation, as may argue zeal without malice, and a desire to win souls, no will to gaul them. For as *Saul's* servants did not onely tell him that he had an evil spirit, but withal told him a remedy, and helpt him to the party that gave him ease, 1 *Sam.* 16. 16, 18. So your Pastour, with a discovery of your sins, shews you a means of cure and recovery for your souls. Yea, do but submit, and the very same Word (like the sword of *Achilles*) will heal again, whom it hath wounded. Whereas if you forthwith fly from your admonisher, it is as if one that is launfed should fly from his Chyrurgion, before his wound can be bound up.

Señ. 9.

Again, flight not him whom God hath placed over you, lest hereafter when you lye gasping on your death-beds, and come to a sight and sense of your sad condition, you wish; Oh that I had now but the opportunity, to converse with such a Minister; as *Saul* flighted *Samuel* while he lived, but would fain have heard and conversed with him, when he was dead. A case which often falls out, for when godless persons are in any distress, they still pray the people of God to pray for them: and commonly those too, whom they have most flighted, hated, and abused. For the Oppressour is in no mans mercy, but his whom he hath trampled upon; and injuries done to us on earth,

earth, give us power in Heaven. Whereupon *Jeroboams* hand being dried up for stretching it out against the Prophet, he sueth to the man of God, saying, *I beseech thee pray unto the Lord thy God, and make intercession for me, that my hand may be restored unto me, and the man of God besought the Lord, and the Kings hand was restored, 1 Kings 13.4,6.* And thus it fared between the Israelites and *Samuel*, *1 Sam. 12.19.* between *Miriam* and *Moses*, *Numb. 12.13.* Thus when the Lords wrath was kindled against *Eliphas* and his two friends, nothing would appease the same, but the prayer of *Job* whom they had so contemned, *Job 42.7,8.* Thus *Simon* the Sorcerer prays *Peter* to pray for him, *Acts 8.24.* Yea, of whom did *Dives*, being tormented in Hell flames, expect and seek for ease, but from *Lazarus* whom lately before he had despised? *Luke 16.24.* For though the wicked scorn and despise the godly in their prosperity, yet in their distress they onely are set by for advice, and to pray unto God for them, who are more ready to sollicite God for their mortallest enemies and persecutors, than they to desire it, be it at the time when they wrong them most, witness *Stephen* when they stoned him, *Acts. 7.60.* And our Saviour Christ when they crucified him, *Luk. 23.34.* Yea, they account it a sin, to cease praying for their worst enemies, *1 Sam. 12.23.* To all which I might add, how such as have wronged and persecuted the servants of God, are not seldom forced to confess their own folly, wicked-

wickedness, and unthankfulness, the Godlies superlative goodness, &c. As *Laban* did to *Jacob*, *Gen.* 30. 27. and *Pharaoh* to *Moses*, *Exod.* 9. 27, 28. and again *chap.* 10. 16, 17. and *Saul* to *David*, saying, *I have sinned, I have done foolishly, and have erred exceedingly: thou art more righteous than I, for thou hast rendred me good, and I have rendered thee evil, &c.* 1 *Sam.* 24. 18. and 26. 21. Rare acknowledgements from Heathen and Christian Kings to their own Subjects. Yet God will have it so, and conscience will compel them to do so; though perhaps afterwards, when the rod is off their backs, they are apt to harden again, and return to their old byass, as did the same *Pharaoh* and *Saul*. For no longer than they smart, no longer can they see: and unless affliction opens their eyes, there is no perswading them, but the righteous man is worse than his neighbour: yea, none so vile, as *Haman* thought and reported of *Mordecai* and the Jews, and *Abab* of *Elijah*, and *Saul* of *David*.

And this I can assure you beyond all exceptions, that if ever your eyes be opened, before you drop into Hell, when the mask of prejudice is taken from before your eyes, you will be cleer of another minde to what you are: you will love that down right preaching which now you hate, and hate those clawing and Rhetorical discourses, that now you so much adore and admire.

Se^t. 10.

Wherefore, *receive with meekness the ingrafted Word, which is able to save your souls, Jam. 1. 21.* Entertain it with an honest and good heart; and in so doing, you shall entertain both God and Christ with it, as our Saviour himself plainly tells you, *Joh. 13. 20.* See also, *2 Chron. 34. 27. 28.* Yea, hear the Word indifferently and impartially, and the rather from such as thou hast hated for their bitterness, perhaps God will convert and save thee by no other means or Minister, than such as he hath placed thee under. *Saul*, if you observe it, when he was possesst with an evil spirit, (as all are that persecute their faithful Pastours) all his spight was at *David*, from whom he received more benefit than from any one man in his Kingdom besides: yet by Gods special appointment, none could give him ease but *David*. Despise not the meanest of Christs Messengers, that delivers his Word purely, aims at his glory and the good of souls. As what saies *Luther*? If God speaks to thee as he did unto *Balaam* by an Ass, thou must have so much wisdom and humility, as to hear him: Gods word is the Sword of the Spirit, that killeth our corruptions, and that unresistable Cannon-shot, which beateth and battereth down all the strong holds of sin and Satan. But above all resist it not, kick not against it, mock not at Gods Word or Messengers. O do not sport away your souls into those pains, which are easless, endless, and remediless. Do you believe there

there is a God? Are you willing to be ſaved? If you are, *Break off your ſins by repentance*, Dan. 4.27. *Ceafe to do evil, learn to do well*, Ifai. 1. 16, 17. Seriously grieve and bewail for the millions of times that you have provoked God, and never more commit the like impiety: yea, as you tender the everlaſting happineſs and welfare of your almoſt loſt and drowned ſouls, ſet upon the work preſently, before the draw-bridge be taken up. Provide with *Joſeph* for the dearth to come, and with *Noah* in the days of your health, build the Ark of a good Conſcience, againſt the floods of ſickneſs: yea, do it while the yearning bowels, and compaſſionate arms of Jeſus Chriſt lie open to receive you, abjure and utterly renounce all wilful and affected evil, leſt when it is too late, it vex every vein of your hearts, that you had no more care of your ſouls.

Again, if God by his Spirit ſhall work this upon your conſciences, (as you will have cauſe to bleſs his Name, that ever you met with ſuch a ſtop, ſo) reſemble not the Ruſtick Saylor, who when he is in danger of ſhipwrack, will promiſe to change his life; but when the ſtorm is overpaſt, he returns to his former vomit, making no conſcience nor account of his vows and proteſtations. But remember, that perfeverance is the crown of graces, and Heaven the crown of perfeverance. If you are convinced, and reſolve upon a new courſe, let your reſolutions be peremptory and conſtant, and take heed you harden not again as *Pharaoh*,
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the young man in the Gospel, *Pilate & Judas* did: resemble not the iron, which is no longer soft than it is in the fire, lest your latter end prove worse than your beginning, *Mat. 12. 43, 45.* As it fared with *Julian* the Apostate, and *Judas* the Traytor; for millions are now in Hell, who thought they would repent hereafter.

God will not give his heavenly and spiritual graces at the hour of death, to those who have contemned them all their life. If in any reasonable time we pray, he will hear us; if we repent, he will pardon us; if we amend our lives, he will save us: But for want of this timely consideration, *Dives* prayed, but was not heard; *Esau* wept, but was not pitied; the foolish Virgins knockt, but were denied. And so it fares with all such fools, they died as they have lived, and commonly go from despair unto destruction.

If you would prevent the like, lay not hold upon mercy, until you be thoroughly humbled. The only way to become *good*, is first to believe that you are *evil*. *God does not pour the oyl of grace, but into a broken and contrite heart.* Would you truly know how evil and miserable you are by Nature, and be very sensible how evil and wicked your hearts are? seriously consider these three particulars: 1. The corruption of your nature by reason of Original sin: 2. Your manifold breaches of Gods righteous Law by actual sin: 3. The guilt and punishment due to you for both. This being done, you will see and find your necessity of a
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Redeemer, who came to save none but weary and heavy laden sinners, even *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, Mat. 15. 24. & 11. 28. And indeed the sense of our wretchedness, and the valuation of our spiritual helps, are the best trial of our Regeneration.

All which, if you would obtain, omit not to pray for the divine assistance of Gods Spirit. For of our selves we cannot think a good thought, 2 Cor. 3. 5. John 15. 4, 5. Swift we are to all evil, but to *any good* immoveable. Wherefore beg of God, that he will give you a new heart, and when the heart is changed, all the members will follow after it, as *Servants* after their *Lord*. Onely let me add, be sure you wholly & only rest on your *Saviour* Jesus Christ *for salvation*, abhorring to attribute or ascribe *ought to doing*. To conclude, if you receive any power against your corruptions, forget not to be thankful; and when God hath the fruit of his mercies, he will not spare to sow much, where he reaps much. This do, *and my soul for yours, God by his grace, will more then supply what is wanting; (as may be seen in his entertainment of the prodigal son) and thou shalt be for ever happy*, Luk. 15. 20. Which is the prayer, and hope, and should be the joy of

Your Impartial Monitor,

R. Y.

Post-

Postscript.

THe Reader may suppose, that this Good Counsel, seldom well taken, is writ to or of some particular Parish, or Pastor: But it neither intends, nor aims at any one, more then another. Onely the case is a common case, and the Author conceived it the best way for conveyance of the matter therein contained: (as the former part intituled, Cordial Counsel, may seem to have been composed by a person of quality, before his death, and after sent to his surviving friends.) And the likeliest means to make such as it concerns, lay it to heart: As Nathan dealt with David, who being sent to him with a message, wrapt it up in a parable; which wrought more upon him, then all the Lectures of the Law could do, for three quarters of a year together. Nor can it be denied, but both this and the former part, are applicable to millions of people, and hundreds of Parishes in the Nation: Though few of them will have the wit or the grace to apply the same to themselves; As they can unto others. 28 MR 59

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